

# Assemblymember Christine Kehoe

*Brings You News*

**March 10, 2003**



**Assemblymember Christine Kehoe, Speaker Pro Tem**

## **Make a Difference in San Diego -- Volunteer**

Interested in making a difference in someone's life? Looking for greater personal fulfillment? For millions of Americans, volunteering is the key to healthy, rewarding, and meaningful lives. Volunteering renews our connection to the community, the state, and the nation, alike. It builds a feeling of self-worth and social responsibility.

The simple fact is volunteers provide valuable services that the private and public sector cannot make available, whether it's helping in a hospital or in the office of an elected official. This is especially true in years like this when there are economic problems in business and for non-profits.

Volunteer San Diego is an organization that can help connect you with the volunteer opportunity that meets your interests and schedule. Volunteer San Diego coordinates a network of volunteers who feed our homeless, serve our seniors, and read to our children. They connect volunteers to 700 non-profits and assist companies, schools and non-profits in developing volunteer programs.

For more information on how you can make a difference in the lives of other San Diegans, go to <http://www.volunteersandiego.org/index.shtml>.

## **Legislation seeks complete investigation of DNA evidence**

Giving prosecutors adequate time to develop cases involving DNA evidence is a crucial step in prosecution and defense of many crimes. This became clear during the trial of David Westerfield for the murder of Danielle van Dam where the prosecution had not received the DNA results back from the laboratory in time for the opening statements in the criminal trial. The result was that both sides were unable to explain the evidence to the jury at a critical time in the trial process. While in many cases both parties would agree to a reasonable continuance to obtain DNA evidence, it appears that the defendant in this case insisted upon a trial within 60 days as required by California law as a tactic to prevent the consideration of DNA evidence by the jury.

I have introduced AB 155 sponsored by San Diego County District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis and the California District Attorney's Association to allow prosecutors and defendants reasonable time to examine DNA evidence before going to trial without infringing on a defendant's right to a speedy trial. This bill was recently approved unanimously by the Assembly Public Safety Committee and on March 10<sup>th</sup>, the Assembly approved this measure and sent it to the Senate for Consideration. AB 155 is supported by the Crime Victims Bureau and Attorney General Bill Lockyer.

To read the text of AB 155 go to [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov) and search by author or bill number.

## **Gay Veterans' Memorial**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender veterans have put themselves in harms way and made the ultimate sacrifice to protect and serve the United States and the freedoms we all enjoy. It is fitting and appropriate that we honor their sacrifices and contributions. This is why I have introduced AB 1520 to create California's official LGBT Veterans' Memorial. AB 1520 would create a commission that would be given the authority for the design, construction, dedication, and location selection of the Memorial. Funding for the Commission and the Memorial would come entirely from private contributions.

This commission would be made up of appointees of the Governor and the Legislature who would serve without pay. The Commission would also be authorized under this bill to designate an existing memorial as California's LGBT Veterans' Memorial.

AB 1520 has not yet been scheduled for its first hearing. To read the text of AB 1520 go to [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov) and search by author or bill number.

## Honoring our Ship, *The Californian*

*The Californian*, a 145-foot cutter tall ship carrying 7,000 square feet of canvas, had her keel laid down at Spanish Landing in San Diego Bay in 1984. Since then she has served as the official tall ship ambassador of the State of California (by 1983 Assembly Resolution) at functions such as the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and the centennial celebration of the Statue of Liberty in 1986.

I have recently introduced AB 965, to designate in law that *The Californian* is California's official tall ship. This legislation is sponsored by the San Diego Maritime Museum, which is located on San Diego's historic Embarcadero. The museum provides educational programs and outreach voyages in addition to being home to *The Berkley* and the *Star of India*, which are both National and State historic landmarks.

*The Californian* serves as a valuable educational resource for all Californians. It has enabled students and adults alike to develop an appreciation for the maritime heritage and coastal resources of California. This floating, operational museum will be making annual voyages along the California coastline in conjunction with visits to ports along the coast. *The Californian* is a great learning resource to all of California in addition to being a historic, goodwill ambassador to the world.

The museum maintains and operates *The Californian* and endeavors to preserve and display California's historic, proud maritime legacy. I urge you to stop by the museum for a visit whenever you are in the area or visit the museum on line at <http://www.sdmartime.com/>.

## Need Help with Medi-Cal or Medicare?

Figuring out the specifics of your medical coverage under Medi-Cal or Medicare can be challenging – but there is help available. HICAP, which stands for Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program, offers services at no cost to beneficiaries.

HICAP provides objective, individualized counseling and advocacy services to beneficiaries addressing Medicare benefits, supplemental insurance plans, HMOs and long term care insurance coverage. HICAP volunteers can help people understand benefits under various plans and HMOs, assist with billing supplemental insurance, resolve problems, and help beneficiaries understand changes in coverage.

In addition, HICAP volunteers provide information to help seniors make choices concerning health care needs. This assistance includes providing comparative information regarding various types of insurance coverage and rates, and comparisons of the various HMOs available to seniors in our state.

Volunteer counselors receive hours of continuing training and are registered with the State of California. HICAP services are free, and counselors do not sell, recommend or endorse any insurance product, agent, insurance company or health maintenance company. To make an appointment with a local HICAP counselor, call please call 1-800-434-0222.

## Visit My Office at The Capitol

If you are among the many San Diegans who will be at our State's Capitol the weekend of March 14-16, I invite you to come by my Office for an Open House on Saturday, March 15, room 3152. The office will be open to the public from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. For more information or to RSVP, call (619) 294-7600. And if you are ever in the State Capitol, please come by. It is always great to see San Diegans visit California's historic statehouse in Sacramento.

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